

Workshop for Development of Backward areas of Uttarakhand

2940. SHRI CM. IBRAHIM: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether a workshop of Scientists and Technologists, including experts in Information Technology, was held from April 21 to 23, 2000, to evolve an action plan for accelerated development of backward areas of Uttarakhand;

(b) whether any strategy to attract Foreign Direct Investment in the region and connecting the region with high band internet were evolved; if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether a strategy to provide for full employment by 2020 was also evolved; if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the action taken and being taken in regard thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI BACHI SINGH RAWAT): (a) to (d) Sir, a Workshop on the "Role of Science and Technology in the Integrated Development of Uttarakhand" was held during April 21-23, 2000 at Kosi-Katarmal, Almora. Several experts and representatives of various Central and State agencies participated in the Workshop. The Workshop covered four themes, namely, (i) Georesources, (ii) Bioresources, (iii) Infrastructure and Technological Interventions and (iv) Socio-economic Aspects. As a follow-up, the Department of Science and Technology has recently set up a Steering Committee to evolve a Mission Mode Project based on the recommendations of the said Workshop and suggest ways and means for inter-sectoral coordination and resource mobilisation. It may be mentioned here that no specific proposals have been evolved on the foreign direct investment and full employment generation by 2020.

Trials on Genetically Modified Crops

2941. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

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RAJYA SABHA

(a) whether Government propose to conduct initial trials on genetically modified crops;

(b) if so, the details of those crops which are under trials;

(c) whether Government have studied the success of these crops in other countries, before beginning such cultivation in the country;

(d) if so, the details thereof, and

(e) by when these crops are likely to be introduced in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI BACHI SINGH RAWAT): (a) and (b): Yes, Sir, to assess the environmental safety, taking also into account safety to human and animal health. Government is permitting the conduct of trials under the Indian Environment (Protection) Act, 1986. Genetically Modified Crops of cotton, tobacco, tomato, brinjal, cauliflower, cabbage, mustard and potato are being tested in Indian environment.

(c) and (d) Yes Sir, information on many crops is available. Any trial in Indian environment requires the assessment of the risks from the available information. No open field trial is authorized before the information is evaluated, and the materials are tested in laboratory and contained Green House conditions for generating additional safety information.

(e) Only after the Government is satisfied about the biosafety and agronomic advantage of genetically modified (G.M) crops, such crops can be permitted to be introduced. No GM crop has yet been commercially introduced in the country.

Central Ethical Committee for Sports

2942. SHRI R. K. ANAND: Will the Minister of YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether, in view of the match fixing and other unethical practices in sports, Government propose to set up a Central Ethical Committee for sports,